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MARCH 18, 2010
ISSUE 851

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CHEMISTRY OF AN ODD COUPLE

Theatre heavyweights team up to tell the story of Lise Meitner, the first lady of atomic science.

COVER PHOTO BY CRAIG JANZEN

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NEWS FEATURE • NEIGHBOURHOODS



Mike McLary of EC Automotive Machining has seen it all after 25 years on 118th Avenue. PHOTO BY CRAIG JANZEN

ONCE SEEDY AND DOWN ON ITS LUCK, 118TH AVENUE IS ON THE LONG CLIMB BACK TO RESPECTABILITY

BY ANDREW PAUL

Mike McLary knows 118th Avenue better than most. Over the 25 years he's worked on the strip, McLary has witnessed the neighbourhood become synonymous with drugs and prostitution.

That's why on March 18 McLary will be one of many 118th Avenue community members to gather in front of the Avenue Theatre at 5 p.m. to say no to the sale of paraphernalia and weapons in the area.

"It's sort of odd that you're selling swords," McLary says about the pawn shops in the area from his desk inside EC Automotive Machining. "I'm sure there are people walking up and down the avenue with swords and machetes, and no one even thought about that, so we said let's get together and see if we can do something about it."

They did, and on Nov. 25, 2009 We Believe in 118 was created.

At the request of the city-run 118th Avenue Neighbourhood Empowerment Team (N.E.T.) stakeholders in the community including the Alberta Avenue Business Association, the Avenue

Initiative Revitalization, Edmonton Police Service and eight businesses gathered and identified drugs and weapons as the most prevalent problems.

There were six businesses in the 118th Avenue Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ) that sold drug paraphernalia, weapons or both. Today, there's only one business left selling glass crack pipes — a dollar store.

"If you're selling stuff to people who are going to do wrong things with it then you're going to get those wrong people in your store," McLary says. "They (store owners) complain that 'everybody steals from us all the time.' Well, why do you think that would be? They're crackheads who need money."

The move to clean up the bill of goods inside stores pairs nicely with the streetscape revitalization project and the Facade Improvement Program that are giving the exterior of the avenue a much needed face-lift.

Starting with 82nd-87th Streets in 2008, the streetscape construction sees the road stripped and repaved, with new sidewalks, gutters, trees and light posts put in after the removal of the old trolley lines. Last year the stretch between 87th-92nd Streets was completed, and crews will rip up 92nd-97th Streets this spring. Business owners can receive a 50 per cent reimbursement on eligible renovations to their exterior storefronts, up to a

The Fall and Rise of 118th Avenue

maximum of \$30,000 for a single street front, or \$60,000 for a business with two street-facing facades.

"When you have the streets looking great you want to have the buildings alongside looking great as well, so those two work together," says Joe Holtz of the Alberta Avenue Business Association.

Earlier in the day Holtz was in city hall arguing for the demolition of the Cromdale Hotel, a structural blight and "crime magnet" on 118th Avenue that has been standing in the way of revitalization efforts.

City council approved the demolition March 13, much to the community's delight.

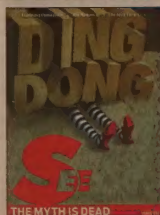
With lively storefronts and new streets, parts of 118th Avenue are beginning to resemble the days of old when the area was a thriving working man's neighbourhood full of blue collar Edmontonians punching the clock in the shipping yards to the north and packing plants to the east.

But that was before the Yellowhead Trail and West Edmonton Mall, when people still supported local mom and pop business in the bustling shopping district on the avenue.

Holtz remembers the severe lack of parking on the strip in the 1970s when he and his wife moved to Edmonton. Anyone who

STORY CONT'D ON P. 4

ACCOLADES • SEE WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO



SEE TAKES HOME FIVE AWARDS AT NATIONAL BETTER NEWSPAPER AWARDS

BY ANDREW PAUL

The competition was tough, but the results from the Canada-wide 2010 Better Newspaper Awards are in, and SEE Magazine has a few things to smile about.

Five things to be exact.

The highest honour bestowed upon our humble publication by the Canadian Community Newspaper

Association (CCNA) is first place for best arts coverage.

"I'm just elated," SEE publisher and editor Jeff Holubitsky says. "It's wonderful to receive this national acknowledgment of our efforts to

pers competing for these awards."

SEE was also awarded first place for best front page for our Halloween cover on local witches, and a blue ribbon honour for papers our size.

FOR A FULL LIST OF WINNERS VISIT
WWW.BETTERNEWSPAPERS.CA

designs quality stories, photos and produce week after week. I mean, there are literally hundreds of pa-

rounding off the list were two second place awards. One was for best photo essay, shot by Ben Lemphers

and focusing on the life of urban originals. Angela Brunschock picked up the other for best environmental writing for her feature story on local food producers.

"This recognition only increases our commitment to provide Edmonton with the best alternative weekly we know how to produce," Holubitsky says.

More importantly, thank you for reading, after all dear reader, you're the reason why we strive for excellence in our reporting every week.

STORY (cont'd from p. 3)

showed up after 9 a.m. would have a long hike to the stores.

It was the heyday of the avenue, but in the 1980s the downward spiral began. As a bank manager during the recession, Holtz watched as small business and homeowners walked into his branch and literally dropped their keys on his desk and walked out with nothing.

"You could already see signs back then of it starting to get depressed with businesses moving out," McLary says. "Alberta Honda used to be across the street and they were the first to go, then Cheetah Cycle moved out, then George's went, then the banks went."

With the real estate market in the dumps opportunistic landlords swept through the area snatching up cheap rental properties bringing what Holtz and McLary call an undesirable element to the area.

"I used to joke all the time that this was a nice little neighbourhood where all we have is hookers — no guns, no drugs, just hookers," McLary says. "I'd say people are so nice in this neighbourhood that they'll come right up top your window and ask if you wanted to party."

Though not visible at first, weapons and drugs soon reared their ugly heads, finally prompting the community to take action. McLary says the lack of communication between businesses and residents was the biggest issue to address before starting to turn around the avenue.

Thanks to some serious attention from Mayor Stephen Mandel, revitalization committees were formed, and communication channels were

opened allowing groups like N.E.T. to begin working on revitalization initiatives, including We Believe in 118.

It's an uphill battle, but McLary and Holtz say it's important to focus on the positive. Young urban professionals and artists are taking advantage of the real estate market in the area to buy the quaint war-time houses sitting on the giant properties nestled beneath the hanging elms.

"The arts and all these other festivals are sort of an antidote to some of the criminal activity that's going on. The more arts you have the more festivals you have the more streetscape construction you have, the more façade improvement you have you start watering down the undesirable element more and more and more and more," Holtz says.

Thanks to the Arts on the Ave. movement headed by Christy Morin, the Carrot Community Coffeehouse, Kaleido Festival and Deep Freeze Festival in January are drawing thousands of people to the area.

Combined with the Avenue Goes to the Dogs and farmers market, Edmontonians outside of the 118th Avenue community are being drawn to the avenue to spend money in the shops and restaurants.

"We want a nice shopping area where it's safe with lots of street activity, and businesses know each other, and where the people living in the area know the businesses," McLary says.

To learn more, or to get involved join the members of We Believe in 118 at 5 p.m. in front of Avenue Theatre, 9030-118th Ave.

DINING • TIME FOR THAI

For Hot Time, Call Ban Thai



IT'S CERTAINLY NOT THE FANCIEST THAI PLACE IN TOWN, BUT IT MAY BE THE MOST AUTHENTIC

BAN THAI
1570-100th Ave., 780-484-8496

BY SCOTT LINGLEY

There's a price to be paid for enjoying authentic Thai food — anyone who has been to Thailand will tell you that. Because real Thai food, the kind you eat in Thailand, tends to

beou Thai or even Thai Binh. With a couple of decades' residence on their busy little strip of one-way coming out of the west end, the dimly lit and eerily quiet dining room looks like nothing major has happened to its interior since its inauguration. Sparkly Christmas wreaths hung over each of the tables in our section, partly obscuring small wooden Siamese dragons barely attached to the trellis that divided us from the business end of Ban Thai. It's not the fanciest setting for Thai dining in town, but at least there wasn't a thick cord of fire ants marching along the balustrade, a sight I got accustomed to dining out on the beaches of Koh Tao.

First order of business: Singha. There's nothing particularly distinctive about Thailand's award-winning lager, but it's practically life-sus-

a som tham (\$12) for the salad. That led to gaeng kiew wan (\$12.50) with coconut rice for an entrée and, as an afterthought, some curly puff (\$7) to start things rolling.

The appetizers almost lived up to the low expectations we had: pastries filled with seasoned pork and some potato — it was a little hard to tell because they were actually kind of small, so there wasn't that much of anything in there. Four pieces came with a light-tasting cucumber, red pepper and onion relish. Maybe next time we'd try the satay.

Tom yum—spicy-sour chicken broth-based soup with plump prawns — grabbed our attention much more forcefully. Apparently medium spice level at Ban Thai is about as hot as I can take it because I had to pace mouthfuls of the potent soup to keep

THE TAB: \$50 FOR TWO (FOOD ONLY)
THE GIST: AUTHENTIC THAI — BUT NOT TOO AUTHENTIC
TRY THE: GREEN CURRY WITH CHICKEN
BEWARE THE: AUTHENTIC AFTER-EFFECTS

pack a chili-pepper punch beyond the comfort level of western standards. So when you get the real thing in all its copiously peppered, fish-sauced, coconut and citrus-lavished glory from a local purveyor like Syphax on Calgary Trail South or Boualouang (whose new premises on 97th Street I have yet to visit), sometimes the experience is crowned with a little intestinal discomfort. In my view, entirely worth it.

Anyhow, in taking in many of the town's main Thai venues, I'd somehow overlooked Ban Thai — or maybe I got it mixed up with Bua Thai or

taining in the blast-furnace heat of Konchanaburi or some other swarthier jungle, though not for the shirtless doofuses you see one-handing it down the road on motorbikes, pulling on a pre-lunch bomber of Singha from the 7-Eleven on their way to a preordained date with road rash. But I digress.

Ban Thai's menu is long and deep and doesn't make it easy to scale down to a reasonable meal for two, especially the broad selection of seafood dishes. Co-diner wanted tom yum of the gang variety (\$10) for the soup course, to which I rejoined with

my diaphragm from spasming involuntarily. It was tasty but, man, it scorched my uvula. Its ferocity gave us to fear that the salad — one that is typically fiery — would cause our eyeballs to melt and roll down our cheeks.

The som tham, however, defied our expectations in content and potency. This salad starts with shredded green papaya and carrots pounded together in mortar and pestle with fish sauce, lime, dried shrimp, garlic and whole dried chilies. But Ban Thai's som tham added crunchy blanched long beans to its shredded carrot, tomatoes and peanuts, tossed in a nicely balanced mix of lime and fish sauce and served over crisp romaine. It was nice not to be attacked by the salad, which itself served as a light counterpoint to the rich, complex entrée.

Gaeng kiew wan is green curry, basil, bell peppers and a handful of peas cooked with, at my request, chicken. The sauce was inky and intense, extended with a little coconut milk to offset the delicious burn and bring out the licorice aroma from the whole leaves of fresh basil folded in. It sure tasted great over creamy coconut rice. Any lingering regrets I had about not ordering something different were instantly dispelled and dreams of a doggybag lunch the next day danced in my head.

Nor did a late-night incursion of mild gastrointestinal distress dim my enthusiasm for the experience of Ban Thai's authentic offerings. By the next day I was ready for a green curry breakfast and, when possible, to delve further into Ban Thai's satisfying bill of fare.

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Do you know a volunteer who shines? Nominate them for the Direct Energy 2010 Volunteer Citizen of the Year Award.

The Volunteer Citizen of the Year Award is presented by Direct Energy and the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association (AWNNA).

Open to residents of communities served by AWNNA newspapers, the award will go to the nominee best exemplifying the volunteer spirit. Direct Energy will award the winner a \$1,000 cash prize, and donate \$5,000 to the winner's community organization/cause of choice. Four semi-finalists will also receive \$1,000 towards their community organization/cause of choice. Hurry, nominations close May 7, 2010.

To enter, visit directenergy.com/vcoy or awnna.com

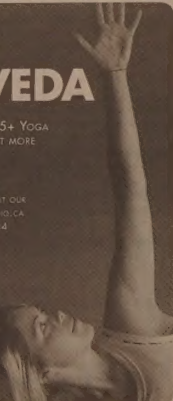


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— Prime Minister Stephen Harper, answering a question posed to him about legalizing pot, during his first YouTube interview 8/9.
 Quoted from Canwest News Service, March 17.

STELMACH BOWS TO THE OIL INDUSTRY

Last week's announcement by the provincial government that it will lower royalty rates for the oil and gas industry has once again caused that power in Alberta rests not in the legislature in Edmonton, but in the skyscrapers of Calgary.

Faced with a crisis of poverty from the oil and gas industry, and with the Wildrose Alliance party nipping at its heels, the Stelmach government reversed its 14-month-old changes to the oil and gas royalty regime. In Discount Ed's Royalty Warehouse, the highest royalty rate falls to 40 per cent for conventional oil and 36 per cent for natural gas, from a current rate of 50 per cent for both. The about-face on royalties alleviates a huge headache for Stelmach. But is it good for Alberta?

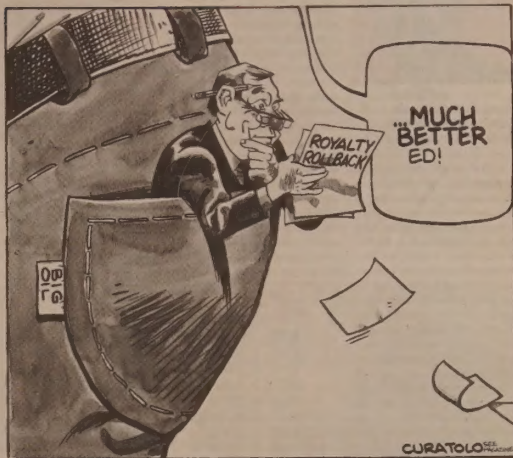
The increased royalties — remember the uproar over the 'Our Fair Share' report?

— were supposed to bring in another \$1.4 billion into the Alberta treasury. The poor, put-upon energy industry cried foul, and poured much of their considerable financial weight behind the Wildrose Alliance. (Leader Danielle Smith, revealing just who is footing the bill for her party, actually suggested that Stelmach apologize to the industry. Maybe he should send flowers, too.)

The government might have been able to ignore the angry stores from the Calgary suits and the petulant withdrawal of financial support if the economy hadn't collapsed, resulting in collapsing oil and gas prices. The industry took a huge hit, and despite the obvious fact the recession was the overarching reason the industry slumped, it was a whole lot easier to blame Stelmach.

With the industry slumping and voters expediting them, Stelmach did the politically expedient thing and scrapped almost all of the changes. While Alberta will forgo revenue (the government says it will be in the area of \$700 million, not the \$1.4 billion in the original increase), the supply side thinking is that lower royalties will lead to increased oil and gas activity, leading to more revenue and more jobs. It could happen, but then again if oil and gas stay low, it might not.

The Our Fair Share report made a lot of sense at the time, and it probably still does. But this is Alberta, where oil and gas rule, and doing anything that smacks of anti-oil is seen as anti-Alberta. Stelmach is betting hundreds of millions of our dollars that appeasing the oil industry will get the suits back onside with his Tories, and take the wind out of Danielle Smith's inflated sails.



THE END OF HOME FIELD ADVANTAGE

Last week, city council gave the OK to remove the natural grass surface of Commonwealth Stadium, and replace it with artificial turf, most likely a product called FieldTurf.

For the past two decades, Commonwealth had the only natural playing surface in the Canadian Football League, truly a case of home field advantage. But the once plush turf has been pounded down from the

many football and soccer players, not to mention concerts. Artificial turf requires no fertilizer or water, and will save the city \$80,000 a year in maintenance. It also holds up a lot better to the pounding it would take from a U2 concert.

Sure, it's the smart, financially sound thing to do. Still, it's a little sad to see the last patch of real grass disappear from the Canadian sporting landscape.

POINT OF VIEW • POLITICS

Alberta Jerks: We're No. 1!



BY TONY SCOTT LINGLEY
**WILDROSE OUTPACING
 POLITICS OUTPACING
 REST OF THE COUNTRY
 IN MORONIC BEHAVIOUR**

that Canada's rights protections cover sexual orientation and that as a nation we legally recognize same-sex marriages. The redated 65-page booklet will go into circulation this spring — what are they going to do, throw it out? They spent \$400,000 of your money making the things. And now Minister Kenney's blinkered viewpoint on human rights is YOUR viewpoint.

And this week, a report from Climate Action Network Canada drew attention to the fact that an onerous new protocol required by the Harper government makes it extremely difficult for journalists to access the opinions of scientists at Environment Canada in a timely fashion.

According to internal documents, Environment Canada has had an 80-per-cent drop in media requests related to their "most high profile issue," climate change science, because researchers have to get permission from the government to answer media calls and are expected to submit any written responses for vetting — and no one's in a big hurry to provide that permission. Sounds like something right out of the playbook of a politician increasingly noted for unashamedly tuning the normal functioning of parliamentary democracy.

This revelation about the "muzzling" of climate change scientists in the federal employ was just one item in a lengthy list of "Troubling Evidence" cited by Climate Action Network's Andrew Cuddy, who also mentions defunding climate change research, undermining regulatory bodies and stacking grant-bestowing organizations with climate change skeptics as other tactics in the federal government's courageous crusade against national dialogue on important issues.

(Troubling as his exceptional treatment is, we'll leave aside Rahim Jaffer's anticlimactic slap on the wrist — a \$500 fine for reckless driving — after he was pulled over last year with alleged illegal blood alcohol and an alleged unspecified quantity of nose-candy, as he's not actually part of the government anymore. But his wife, junior cabinet member and MP for Simco-Gravelly Helena Guergis could fairly be characterized as having indulged in jerk-like behaviour recently at the Charlottetown airport. Hard to believe there wasn't a camera-phone in attendance, but media recreations have managed to render quite an unflattering portrait of her right honourable shit-fit before a small audience of security and

LINGLEY cont'd on p. 7

BY THE NUMBERS • CHANGING FACE OF CANADA

IMMIGRATION IS CHANGING THE FACE OF CANADA, WITH MORE VISIBLE MINORITIES TAKING UP RESIDENCE EVERY YEAR
 SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

Non-white population of major Canadian cities (2006)

Toronto 43%

Vancouver 42%

Calgary 22%

Edmonton 17%

Montreal 16%

Quebec City 2%



FEATURE • TV AUDITIONS

Inside The Dragon's Den

HIT CBC SERIES COMES TO TOWN, LOOKING FOR ENTREPRENEURS WITH A STORY TO TELL

BY MAURICE TOUGAS

If you're going to make it into the Dragon's Den, you may have to get past Molly Duignan first. Duignan is a producer of the hugely popular CBC series, and as such is one of the people you'll have to impress if you have any chance of appearing before the moneyed 'dragons'.

"Edmonton has yet to fail us," said Duignan as she frantically prepared to hear pitches on Tuesday at the CBC Edmonton studio downtown. Response from Edmonton has been so great in the show's five seasons that two days have been set aside for Edmonton.

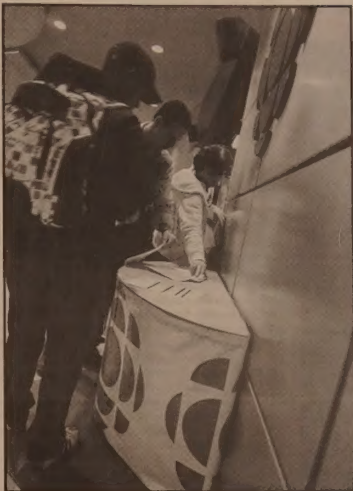
Indeed, millions of Canadians have taken *Dragon's Den* to heart. The show — where inventors, entrepreneurs and pie-in-the-sky dreamers make investment pitches to five wealthy Canadian 'dragons' — has become must-see TV for Canadians, with an average audience of 2 million, peaking as high as 3.7 million. Those are terrific numbers for Canadian TV, particularly in light of its first season numbers, where an average of 219,000 people regularly tune in.

The CBC *Dragon's Den* production crew is on a six-week, 40-city tour of Canada looking for contestants, and they're having no trouble finding them. Duignan was in Kelowna on Monday, where she heard 80 pitches. On Tuesday in Edmonton, contestants were lined up outside the CBC studios hoping for their shot at the big time.

No one walks away with a guaranteed shot at appearing on the Toronto-based show. Once the producers have collected the 4,000 or so pitch pitches they'll hear across the country, they gather in Toronto to compare notes and pick the 300 or so pitches with the most potential, either as an investment for the dragons or as good television for the folks at home. Even then, there's no guarantee of a spot. Winners are flown to Toronto, where an entire season of the show is shot in just 19 long days. When they run out of time, contestants could be left on the outside looking in. Fans of the show might wonder how some potentially ridiculous ideas make it to the den.

"You can't just expect to get million dollar companies," Duignan explains. "We're looking for big businesses — the dragons want to invest their cash — but it's also an educational, entertaining program."

While the lesser ideas get the often brusque brush-off from the dragons, there are plenty of "a-ha!" moments.



Would-be entrepreneurs line up to attend *Dragon's Den* auditions. | PHOTO BY CRAIG JANZEN

as Duignan describes them, when a simple, but brilliant invention is presented.

Among those waiting to make their pitches on Tuesday was Jason Mielke, who has an idea for a TV series that features police, firefighters and social workers — "American Heroes" as the show would be called — pitching in to renovate worthy charities. He's decked out in an American flag hardhat, and he's come with a social worker friend and an interior decorator. His long-term goal is to catch the eye of Mark Burnett, the creator of *Survivor* who produces the American version of *Dragon's Den*, called *Shark Tank*.

Mielke has seen first hand what an infusion of *Dragon's Den* money can do: his sister, Rachael, scored a deal last year to finance her jewelry business, which has become a major success.

Andy Mayer and his fiancée Sacha Snyder came in from Edison, where three rambunctious kids in tow (couldn't find a babysitter) with an idea that will save prevent highway construction workers from being hit by passing vehicles. He won't say what it is, but will admit to investing \$20,000 in the idea, which is all he's asking as an investment.

Once the wait is over, contestants find that appearing before Duignan is almost as tough as appearing before real dragons, although she's not as tough as the notoriously aversive and often hilarious rude Kevin

O'Leary.

She and another producer pepper the would-be contestants with multiple questions, not unlike the grilling they would get on the show. One woman has created a universal makeup application, which she proceeds to demonstrate on another producer. She's attractive and articulate, and would clearly make great TV. But Duignan points out that her request for \$325,000 for 20 per cent of her company is, as O'Leary would put it, "insane", and gently advises her to re-evaluate her company's valuation.

Another contestant wants a small investment in his local professional wrestling outfit, which prompts an anecdote from Duignan that *Dragon's Den* fans will love: Jim Treiving, the Boston Pizza magnate and dragon, used to be a masked wrestler in Edmonton.

While the would-be Vince McMahon is asking for small potatoes, another contestant wants \$3 million to build resort cabins on land he owns in the Crownstern Pass. If he's a huge ask, but his personal story — a German immigrant who was smuggled out of East Germany in his father's backpack — is just the kind of personal detail the show loves.

Once the auditions are over, the contestants will have to wait by the phone for a call from the show. But they won't have to wait long — filming of season six of *Dragon's Den* begins at the end of April.

LINGLEY cont'd from pg. 5

airline staff regardless. Props to the Minister of State for the Status of Women for proving that she can out-asthete any man in the room but, unlike her trouser-wearing counterparts in cabinet who are stealthily fashioning a jockocracy before the eyes of the world, the reputation she's demolishing is her own.)

(Premier Ed Stelmach comes in for similarly parenthetical treatment, in that his public flounders of late smell rather more of sheepishness and desperation than jerkishness. With a whopping 16-per-cent approval rating playing out before the whole province, like having to walk back the denial that he had seen grisly images of waterfowl perishing in oil-slicked tundra ponds — "Oh, those ducks" — Stelmach lacks the swaggering unilateralism of southern Alberta boys like Kenney, Harper

and King Ralph, from whose wobbly shadow he's having a hard time emerging. What's interesting is that Stelmach actually seems to be paying a political price for his policy and public-relations missteps.)

My point is only this: if Harper and Kenney are so sure they're doing what's best for Canada by sliding the sticks around issues that the public deems important, why do they feel compelled to resort to such underhanded methods?

I had hoped that our younger generations might grow up in a world where they'd enjoy at least some vestige of Canada's former international reputation as a beacon of decency, fairness and tolerance. Instead they might be reaping the fallout of a made-in-Alberta solution to political transparency and good government.

Comments? Send them to letters@see.gawest.ca

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THEATRICAL FORMULA • PREVIEW

Cathy Derkach stars as early scientist Lise Meitner in *The Science of Disconnection* (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

THEATRE HEAVYWEIGHTS TEAM UP TO TELL THE STORY OF LISE MEITNER, THE FIRST LADY OF ATOMIC SCIENCE

THE SCIENCE OF DISCONNECTION
Written by David Belke, music by Darrin Hagen, directed by
John Hudson, starring Cathy Derkach, Varscona Theatre,
March 18 to April 4, tickets at www.thevarscona.com

STORY BY STACEY LAWRENCE

David Belke and Darrin Hagen are unlikely collaborators. A peculiar pair. An odd couple.

Edmonton's esteemed literary celebrity playwright and *The Edmonton Queen*—drag queen that is—have joined forces to create a one-woman show about something you'd never expect in the arts...science.

The Science of Disconnection is their new play being staged at the Varscona Theatre. Belke wrote the words, Hagen wrote the music. "But it's not a musical," stresses Belke. "It's a play with music."

It's a story about the life, passion and genius of Lise Meitner, a woman as important as Einstein, who in fact proved Einstein's theory of relativity, who discovered nuclear fission and whom most of us have never heard of.

"I wanted to share her life, her personality and her achievements with a wider audience," says Belke. "The goal with this show was never just to report the incidents. Not to do a dramatized book report. I wanted to get inside her head and share her thought processes and with Lise, you can't share her thoughts without sharing her science."

And so, I wasn't prepared for words like "protactinium," or phrases like "nuclear bombardment of uranium," to be thrown into our casual conversation in the cushy dressing room of the Varscona Theatre. But after so many months in creation, and then many more in production, science is the inevitable headspace of this group. With Belke's need to understand the science to understand the psyche, Hagen setting equations to music, and Cathy Derkach, who plays Meitner, with lines describing all things molecular floating around in her head, the language of physics has become their vernacular. They gush about astronomy, talk about mathematics in music and the artistic nature of a scientist in casual chit chat.

“HAHN EVENTUALLY STABBED HER IN THE BACK AND TOOK ALL THE CREDIT FOR DISCOVERING NUCLEAR FISSION FOR HIMSELF.”

Chemistry of an Odd Couple

"I know, we sound smart," jokes Derkach.

"We really got our geek on with this show," laughs Hagen.

And they are so passionate about telling the story of Meitner, who earned her PhD at a time when it was banned by law for girls to be educated past the level of junior high.

"She was basically put in a corner of a dark and dingy basement with a separate entrance so that she wouldn't run into anyone else," says Belke.

She partnered with chemist Otto Hahn, with whom she discovered a new element (protactinium.) But, being of Jewish descent in Nazi Germany forced her to flee Berlin in 1938. While she was in Sweden, Hahn continued his research and sent her baffling results of his experiments. What she discovered changed the world. She proved, mathematically, that Hahn had split the atom.

"If Lise hadn't sat down and figured it out that day," says Hagen, "then the whole course of the war would have changed because that's what backed the atomic bomb. All that stuff came out of that moment. She kind of went '2 + 2 = Oh My God!'"

And Hahn eventually stabbed her in the back and took all the credit for discovering nuclear fission for himself," says Belke, adding that move won Hahn the Nobel Prize. "She was denied any recognition. Although she felt she was due credit, she was never in it for fame or reputation."

"I love that this shows the human element," says Derkach. "She actually was a living, breathing, feeling person functioning in a world with many, many obstacles like, 'I will be killed by the Nazis' or 'I don't have enough money' because she worked for nothing."

"So, no jazz hands?" I ask of the music.

Laughter fills the dressing room, some German accents to song, and then Belke gets serious.

"The music is part of the story telling, simple as that. It's part of the narrative. And it compels and it informs and illuminates and it shares those emotions that Lise herself is unwilling to open up to the audience."

"And ultimately," interjects Hagen, "just trying to take the actual physics and illustrate it through sound is a compelling journey."

It is here, at the beginning of Hagen's journey, that concrete science becomes abstract.

"I started pulling sounds out of the air," he explains. "The dial tone of the phone, the water dripping off the faucet and whistles and taps and just whatever I could hear. For me it became about trying to picture diving into an atom and suddenly, the space becomes around you instead of looking at it. I hear music in that."

"The play sort of moves in scenes that interconnect and flash back and some of them are very rich and some have rhythm and repetition."

Belke has created a lyrical dialogue that has be-

come the rhythm of the language.

"I'm just trying to learn all the words in the right order," Derkach jokes, inciting more laughter. "David's written a very poetic and beautiful and easy to grasp play. Anyone can come see this and walk away with some understanding of it. This is not an inaccessible kind of weird science thing, it's a beautiful piece."

It seems to me that this isn't an unlikely collaboration after all. It feels like Belke and Hagen have been working together for years. They share the same vision, one they've created together from their own separate vantage points. They share a respect for each other's work. Throughout conversation, each one catapults off the other's ideas. There is a constant stream of laughter, and it feels like I am among old friends.

"David and I actually share a passion for writing. We're both work horses, we both refuse to give up before it's right," says Hagen. "The main difference between our work to date is, I think my stuff is seen as more comedic and David's stuff is seen as literary to the common eye. And that's because I spent my first years in a dress making an ass of myself. David does lots of comedies too, but the first thing that comes to mind is some of his more serious work."

The literary work he's referring can be found within the more than 30 plays Belke has written, but he actually started his career, and is still an active player, in Edmonton's crazy world of improv. He's a regular in Theatre Sports and Die-Nasty and firmly rooted in comedy, which provides these two personalities with a lot of common ground. Hagen spent the first two decades of his career as the star of drag acts and performing with his troupe Guys in Disguise, and he's written a book called *The Edmonton Queen*. No, not an odd couple at all.

"We were so copacetic right from the beginning," says Belke. "The thing I love about Darrin's work is that it's all about heart. For both of us, it fundamentally comes down to the story."

"Let's face it, theatre is a collaborative art form, simple as that. I'm lucky enough to be working with Darrin and John [Hudson, the director] and Cathy. I would be an idiot if I wasn't listening to their insights and their ideas."

And this collaboration of talent is contributing a one woman monologue to the canon of Canadian Theatre, providing a complex role for a not so young actor, which is so important in this world where the majority of the great female leads are doled out to the younger generation.

So get ready for the unexpected, because the foundations of this show are no where to be found in the realm of ordinary.

"Dive into the unknown with both feet, with a bunch of talented people," dares Hagen, and you'll find "something glorious."

FREE FASHION • PREVIEW

Stylist Partnership Kicks Off Design Careers

DESIGN STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE FASHION SHOWS DON'T NEED CLOTHES, BUT SHOES ARE A MUST

MAKE IT KICK

A fashion show at Eveline Charles Academy, 3rd floor of City Centre Mall, Saturday, March 20, 7-10 p.m. free.

BY JEN HOYER

What do you get if you combine one part running shoe, one part design student and one part hair stylist?

Throw in great music and one of Edmonton's top hip hop crews and you've got *Make It Kick*, a fashion show and silent auction from Grant MacEwan's Design Students Organization.

And it should be huge because everyone loves shoes and that's the focus.

"There's a certain affinity for shoes that everybody just seems to have," says Katrina Panis, lead organizer for the volunteer-run event. "People get their shoes customized and they're worth hundreds of dollars."

Feeding off this trend, the group of design students from MacEwan University has tried their hand at customizing Nike Air Force Ones, and they'll be showing off their work at *Make It Kick*.



Students from MacEwan University's design program and Eveline Charles Academy partner to show off talents. PHOTO BY CRAIG JANZEN

The shoes might steal the show, but they won't be the only artwork on display. Students from Eveline Charles Academy will be doing hair and makeup, and the Dynasty Dance Crew will bust out their moves while the models are taking a break from the catwalk.

But this event doesn't just focus on creativity, it's also about collaboration.

The idea behind the interdisciplinary show is for students to merge

their efforts with artists in other disciplines they might not have a chance to work with otherwise.

"It's great to see people from different walks of life who maybe wouldn't work together normally," says Panis, acknowledging that there's something unique and exciting about the combination of featured artists. "You can feature hair and makeup and shoes and that can be a fashion show."

For participants, this is a chance to

put their creativity to work outside the classroom. While class assignments might not let students think outside the box until their second or third year, this event provides an opportunity for students to work with things they've never worked with, no matter their academic level.

"Working with something different is a great way to develop yourself as a designer and really broaden your horizons," Panis explains.

Make It Kick follows up on last

year's *Make It Bold* event, and while some of the shoe designers are veterans of that project, there are a lot of young, new faces in the crowd.

The design students are working in a medium they don't usually get their hands on. In addition to organizing the event, Panis designed a pair of shoes for the show.

"The biggest experience was playing with the material, learning to work with leather was a challenge," she says.

The designers rose to the challenge, and the shoes promise to make a splash. Some have been painted or covered with fabric and one pair has been transformed into Egyptian mummies.

The shoes won't just serve as eye candy, they'll also be available for purchase through a silent auction. All money raised will go to the Design Students Organization, which funds professional development opportunities and events like this to help Edmonton's emerging designers stretch their minds and try new things.

While there will be a bar, *Make It Kick* is a free, all ages event with fashion shows happening every hour and the Dynasty Dance Crew showing off their moves in between.

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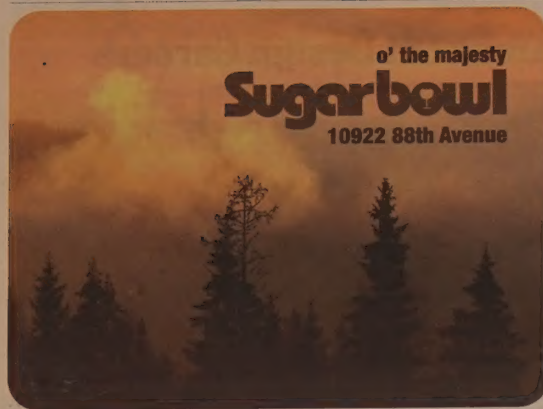
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The Science of Disconnection

Destiny, Discovery, Deceit, The Lie Meitner story.

Written by:
 David Belke

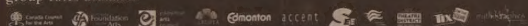
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SHADOW
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AROUND TOWN - COMMENTARY

Playing It Down



WILDLIFE FISH GRIUKOWSKY
**HANDS OFF MY DOWNLOAD,
 FROM THE ETHER WORLD
 TO STREET CORNERS.
 THE PLAYERS ARE JUST FINE**

An interesting bit of legislation has just been proposed by former L'Espresso singer Charlie Angus, now an NDP MP out of Timmins, Ont. In an attempt to keep Canadians in our rather fortunate bubble of legal-downloading freedom, Angus is proposing an upgrading of some of the terms to our copyright act, which would include a levy on iPods and a galvanizing of specific permission to do what you want with your digital media, which American lobbies have long tried to fight and tightly control.

Currently in Canada, we pay levies on recording media, which debunks

where the debate, as it should, continues. We shouldn't have to fully finance a dying business model with exorbitant levies on our iPods, which would just drive us to buy 'em outside of Canada. But a small balancing seems fair, especially so mid-level artists can recoup some supper.

HITTIN' THE STREETS

Speaking of sliding scales, the annual Busker's Ball is on Friday, showcasing the supernal, undownable talents of Babe Lloyd (your emcee,) Marco Claveria, Paul & Gine, Doug Hoyer, Humberto Medeiros & Lisa B., Bill Carley and jackrabbits rhyming of Locution Revolution.

Says organizer Carley, "Rather than out-and-out charging the amount we would need to cover our full costs, we ask for a donation set on a sliding scale based on one's ability to pay and how much the show is enjoyed. In other words, we put our faith in the public enjoying our show enough - with a tip our hat to the old busking tradition - to let them set the price."

Ah, if only our professional sports teams worked this way, there'd be a

AS A GROUP'S POPULARITY RISES AND IT REACHES A CRITICAL MASS - WHAT I CALL RADIO/TORRENT THRESHOLD

the idea we're an illegal downloading paradise. Fact is, we pay considerably more for blank CDs and DVDs than most countries. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been pumped back into what's become a fading model joining horse-and-carriages and medicinal leeching.

It's important to take into account, the entire business model of getting music into your ears has been democratically shifting for years, and in only one direction. Paying to access recorded songs is no longer mandatory, it works on a sliding scale. So while you're still going to buy a CD from a local band, as it's the only way to get their awesome music home, as a group's popularity rises and it reaches a critical mass - what I call the Radio/Torrent Threshold - they'll begin to recoup the costs of their effort with live performances. Some would argue this is unfair, a punishment for success. But as revealed by the London Times last year, actual artists are making more money now than at any other time in history because they reacted by adjusting costs for live gigs.

Home taping, in other words, never did manage to kill music. Nor have digital locks because spying and litigation stopped its unstoppable proliferation. You can look up the details of Angus' proposals on his website,

little more money floating around the street-level economy and less high-price propaganda billboards of fat suckers in Oler's jerseys. Anyhoo, hats off to the noble musicians. A suggested fare of ten bucks is rather fair, that is.

Also of note, standup-bass emperor Pete Turland just booked a show at Empress Monday to perhaps complement his gig with Ronnie Hayward at the Black Dog two days later. It's going to a week for wearing nice duds and dancing in pubs, and now that the patios are open, some drinking I believe.

PUMP YOUR FILTHY FIST

Just wanted to mention, as we're touring Whyte Avenue, how much you really need to check out Filthy McNasty's on Monday nights, where metal and hardcore reigns supreme. Caught Savannah again, Robin Daley screaming and hanging off the ceiling girders, pumping his fist in the air, making sure everyone's having a good time. Opening up for them was Omega Cron (great name, barbarians), who my lady friend described as being half Maiden, half Priest, half hot (meaning fully hot.)

Drinks are also ridiculously cheap, as a number of local hangovers will testify. Thanks for keeping the metal alive, dudes.

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THE BOY WHO COULDN'T SLEEP AND NEVER HAD TO
BY DC PIERSON. Vintage 240 pp. \$17.99. Paperback.
★★★★☆

BY MICHAEL HINGSTON

The Boy Who Couldn't Sleep and Never Had To, the debut novel from 25-year-old comedian and actor DC Pierson, possesses a great joke built into the premise that's made all the funnier by never being acknowledged directly. The book tells the story of an exceedingly nerdy friendship between two high school kids, Darren and Eric, who spend hours pouring over their sketchbooks creating an elaborate universe of sci-fi creatures, gadgets and cosmic oddities.

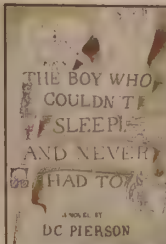
Then, one day, Eric makes a confession, he's never fallen asleep. But for some reason, which Eric doesn't understand, he doesn't need to. While others lay snugg in their beds dreaming and recharging their biological batteries, he has an extra eight hours in which to play video games, find new fringe interests to obsess over and wander the empty streets of suburban Arizona.

While Darren struggles, understandably, to process this new information, he and Eric both take an interest in Christine, a big-hearted drama student who's as at ease amongst the high school's chattering classes as they are inept. She meets them accidentally, while painting sets next to the loading dock where they like to eat lunch in solitude and create specs for the latest model of Agrarian Berserker, or a group of laptop monks who dwell in *The Spoke*, an aborted half-constructed space platform.

And here we find the joke, brilliant in its simplicity and precision. When given the hypothetical choice of real-life superpowers or making out with a girl, teenage males—even the biggest sci-fi heads imaginable—will inevitably choose to make out.

On the whole, the book's goals are modest; its means are simple. While not technically categorized as such, *The Boy Who Couldn't Sleep* reads exactly like young adult fiction, which is to say it's light, propulsive and charmingly goofy. Don't come in expecting the language to knock your hat off, or looking for any big ideas tossed about. This is pure story, told with enough wit and irreverence to keep the pages madly turning.

When Pierson zooms in far enough, there are also occasional flashes of a finely observed comedy of teenage manners. The scene in which Darren realizes Eric and Christine have come up with their



Cover of *The Boy Who Couldn't Sleep and Never Had To* and its author, DC Pierson. A PHOTO SUPPLIED

own inside joke referring to people and events as "IQs," is painfully true to life, the more he tries to mechanically get in on it, the more desperate and pathetic he comes off. However other characters, like Darren's older brother and all of the parents, feel too broadly sketched. I suppose when you move at this speed, a lot of the details inevitably get blurred.

who is also a trained improviser, is dutifully following the premise through to its natural conclusion. If you give a kid superpowers, eventually a man in dark sunglasses is going to track him down. That's just how it goes.

Looking back on it though, the best moments come from that middle section, where hormones and imagi-

AND HERE WE FIND THE JOKE, BRILLIANT IN ITS SIMPLICITY AND PRECISION

As the book goes on, things take an increasing turn toward sci-fi, with Eric beginning to worry some mysterious entity is trying to capture him and exploit his ability. (If that sounds like something out of their imagined sketchbook universe, well, you're not too far off.) And you can see why the third act swerves the way it does, it's right in line with the book's off-kilter logic and further proves Pier-son's fearlessness in shaking up his story. It's as if the whole thing were a thought experiment and the author,

nations are both running wild in tandem. Take the end of the scene where Christine first suggests that Darren hang out with her outside of school. He anxiously glances back as he walks away, "to make sure the thing that I think just invited me to a party is a girl and not a trick of the light or swamp gas or a bunch of Drama Club flyers whipped around by the wind into a girl-shaped cyclone."

To his relief, he's not mistaken. "It is, in fact, a girl, and she's waving and cute."

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BY JESSE LOCKE

Detroit disco-metal schlock comedy outfit Electric Six first found fame and infamy in the early 2000s with novelty hits "Dangle! High Voltage," "Dance Commander" and "Gay Bar."

Since then, the band has been unceremoniously dropped by its record label, seen three out of its six original members quit and was sued by a previous studio engineer, yet continues raging against the machine with album No 7 now nearing completion. SEE caught up with frontman Dick Valentine while he was at the post office.

SEE: By name alone, Electric Six must perpetually remain a six-piece band. Outside of the super cool Satanic connotations, what makes six the magic number?

Dick Valentine: If we ever dropped to five, we'd change the name to Electric Jesus. As for Electric Six, I'm actually not that fond of it and am



Electric Six's Dick Valentine and the other Detroit five just won't quit. (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

Attack side-project

SEE: On your website, you wrote, "Canada is second only to North Ko-

**CANADA IS SECOND ONLY TO NORTH KOREA
IN TERMS OF DIFFICULTY FOR BANDS TO ENTER.**

rea with XL in 2002 and had to change from our original moniker, the Wild Bunch. At that point, there was already a legally established band of the same name. I guess it's a Massive

rea in terms of difficulty for bands to enter. What kinds of border troubles have you had?

DV: If you've accrued any kind of encounter with the law, no matter how minor, Canada is really tough on letting people in. You have to jump through a lot of hoops, and it's not like that with any other country. We went to Russia and they didn't say a word except for "Come on in, Comrade!"

SEE: I also read that several band members are hoping to run into Lanny McDonald in Alberta to garner some facial hair grooming tips. What do you think Big Red could teach you?

DV: In my opinion, he's the number one Calgary Flame of all time, and I'm sure he could teach us a lot about a variety of things in life.

SEE: Finally, I wanted to address a long-running rumor: On your 2003 hit "Dangle! High Voltage," is that Bill Clinton playing the saxophone?

DV: [Laughs] Actually, that's him Diamond, the guy who recorded the song and then later sued us. And Jack White. Long story short, he recorded lots of Detroit bands before they were famous, charging \$30 an hour. A lot of those bands ended up making money - a lot in particular making a shitload - and Jim decided he was the producer and deserved a bigger cut. All he did was hit record! The Jack White case is the only one that made it to a courtroom, and was then dismissed in 10 minutes. The minute money gets involved in a music scene, it turns into a feeding frenzy.

SEE: People get hungry.

DV: That's the name of my next song! I'm totally gonna use that.

SEE: Great, just give me a cut

Bright Solo Debut



Bedouin Soundclash's Jay Malinowski brings his debut solo effort to 6-town. (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

**CLOUDED BY CLICHE,
BEDOUIN FRONTMAN CROSSED
THE COUNTRY TO FIND BRIGHT
LIGHTS & BRUISES**

JAY MALINOWSKI CD RELEASE

with Kierie Starr and Michael Rault, the Pawnshop, (2005)
Rd. Ave. 3, Sunday March 21

BY JENNY FENIAK

Jay Malinowski is keepin' it real.

The frontman for the shiny Canadian reggae pop group Bedouin Soundclash was starting down the barrel of the ultimate musical cliché.

"Band starts, band gets moderately successful, people lose focus, lead singer goes and writes a self-indulgent solo record..." Malinowski explains from his hometown in Toronto. "I had lost a lot of faith in what exactly it is we're doing because it feels like we're just touring and it just seems like it's not affecting anything."

So he put his heart and faith on the line, turned the gun and pulled the trigger, blowing the cliché to bits.

The result is *Bright Lights & Bruises*, his solo debut that was plumbied searching the depths of his soul and keeping his focus as sincere as possible.

"It's like Hemingway said, 'You have to experience things to write about them.' It kind of comes down to the things I thought I would regret. I'm actually happy to have in my life now, as long as they're behind me."

"You've just got to maintain the fact they're behind you. That's the important thing. And then move on, definitely move on," Malinowski says with a chuckle.

Professionally, Bedouin went through a shake up when they let their drummer go early last year. On top of that Malinowski, saw the end of a long-term romantic relationship. So to put things in perspective, he holed up alone to write in his apartment before heading west to record in Vancouver where he grew up.

"I recorded it in Armoury Studios in Vancouver, which is Bruce Fairbairn's studio. His family still owns it. So it felt like going home for me anyway, being there and being with friends," says Malinowski, specifically referring to his childhood friend

Kevin Fairbairn, son of the late legendary rock producer.

Also on the coast, Malinowski reconnected with pals from Hot Hot Heat who had toured with Bedouin a few years back.

"I had everything arranged, but Steve and Paul from the band played organ and drums on any tracks that have actual drums - I think there's only a couple," says Malinowski.

Bright Lights & Bruises was released on Bedouin's own label, Pirates Blend Records, which offers the artist ample freedom, including the ability to choose who he tours with. He's supporting his solo release with the current tour taking him across across the country and this time out, Malinowski offered the opening slot to singer-songwriter and Calgary-native Kierie Starr and Edmonton's own rising star Michael Rault.

"We met Michael when we toured with Ben Stevenson, another Edmonton guy, and [Michael] was playing guitar in that band and he showed us some of his solo stuff. And he's a force on stage. He's just this little guy, and then he starts playing and it's amazing," Malinowski insists.

But all the new experiences and influences can't replace the tried and true company of best friend and Bedouin bandmate Eric Sinclair.

"There's some great people with me on tour, but it's just different," says Malinowski. "Me and Eric have been around each other and are best friends and we have that bond, so we don't even have to really say much to each other, you just feel comfortable."

But, even with the shake up and some time apart from his main project, Malinowski says things are better than ever and he can't wait to get back to Bedouin work.

"It's going really well. We're more excited about our band now than we ever have been actually. I just had breakfast with our [new] drummer Seykora Lumbumba this morning and we're starting to work on a new record. And we're going to be down in Philadelphia doing that next month," says Malinowski.


Looks like there's plenty more happy, shiny days ahead for Malinowski's band and their legion of fans.

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If you could ask your younger self one piece of advice, what would it be?

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MUSIC SOCIETY • PREVIEW

Gogo Goes Rock And Roll

EDMONTON'S NEW ROCK AND ROLL SOCIETY SPANS THE YEARS AS DAVID GOGO IS SET TO ROCK BLATCHFORD HANGER

DAVID GOGO, CARSON COLE AND EDMONTON'S FLYING SAUCERS
Saturday March 20 at Fort Edmonton Park's
Blatchford Hanger. Tickets and info at www.edrock.ca

BY ANDREW PAUL

David Gogo, international man of rock and blues, has the ideal abode. The sprawling compound in Nanaimo, B.C., is a 65-hectare Christmas tree farm, and even just 15 minutes outside of the city, his enormous property provides a comfortable buffer between him and the other 78,691 residents in the area.

It also makes for a nice recording space, as his 10th studio album *Diff'rent Views* stands to prove.

"I've always read about when Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones, and these different people (who) made these great albums who went to an old house in the country," Gogo says. "There's one called Headley Grange that was featured in the movie *I Might Get Loud*, and I thought, 'Well I've got a big house in the country, maybe we can do the same thing.'"

The album has garnered serious attention, as well as Nanaimo's Excellence in Culture Award, adding him to the prestigious ranks of past winners Diana Krall and jazz trumpeter Ingrid Jensen.

It's nice to be recognized in your hometown says the fourth generation Gogo. His great-grandfather purchased the land in 1897 while working in the Nanaimo coal mines, tending to the pack mules and horses. But the Gogos's needed to make the land more financially sustainable.

It was a Gogo Christmas custom to make a few extra bucks selling trees culled from their property. After re-searching you-cut farming, where



David Gogo leaves his tree farm to launch Edmonton's Rock and Roll Society. (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

customers pay to cut their own trees from the property, the Gogos went pro and opened the gates to Gogo's Christmas Tree Farm.

It's a good business that allows Gogo to keep in touch with his community, but there's also a downside.

"You're like trying to walk through the grocery store and people are asking you when you're going to play next because they heard you on the radio," he says. "You also walk into the bar and see some guy you went to high school with and he'll yell something stupid like, 'You're sure fat these days.'"

That's why touring is nice. And with bands in Ottawa, Holland and on Vancouver Island, it's easy.

This weekend, Gogo will head east to headline the newly founded Rock and Roll Society of Edmonton's (RARSE) launch party.

Already knowing his history, Gogo will get a taste of Edmonton's past at the gig in Fort Edmonton Park.

Gogo played Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival last year and says he's always pumped to play in our "great music town."

Especially when it involves com-

munity music initiatives.

"RARSE was born this year for the purpose of promoting and preserving the great music of our age, and to involve and provide a safe environment for families and young people to enjoy it," says Martin Salloom, president and chief executive officer of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce who moonlights as RARSE spokesperson and committee member.

Memberships are sold with the purchase of your first ticket to a RARSE concert and you'll receive membership prices for every concert thereafter, translating into saving \$5 per ticket.

Gogo agrees organizations like RARSE are important in the fight to preserve music.

"You guys are lucky in Edmonton to have something like CKUA that's easily accessible. But a lot of young people only know Lady Gaga and all that horse shit, because that's all they're exposed to," Gogo says. "But once they get exposed to some really good music played by really good people, they're going to get interested."

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REBEL OPERA • PREVIEW

Jane Eaglen
McDougall United Church | Friday March 19

After 25 years of high-pressure contracts and demanding roles, Jane Eaglen, one of the world's greatest dramatic sopranos, is letting her hair down a little, so to speak.

"It's about what I want to do now and I'm lucky to be in that position," the expatriate Briton says from her home in Seattle.

Edmontonians can count their blessings because one of those things is an intimate vocal performance for the Canadian Western Bank Vocal Gala tomorrow night.

Recital is a somewhat new medium for Eaglen, veteran of nearly 30 commercial recordings and widely acclaimed for her portrayal of the heroines in Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Puccini's *Turandot* and *Der Fliegende Holländer* in some of the greatest opera houses in the world.

But for the seasoned singer, who entered

the opera circuit straight out of college, new is something to be welcomed with open arms. In keeping with this philosophy, for her Edmonton debut, she's designed a program that slightly bends traditional structure.

"[A] program is supposed to be intellectually planned and chronologically correct, but in my experience, those kinds of programs can be pretty boring," Eaglen explains. "A typical recital program has several languages, but I did want to include some arias as well, so what I've done is to do some songs in a particular language and put an aria in that language at the end."

Her program will include Italian: French: German and Russian language pieces from Bellini, Massenet, Wagner, Dupart, Spontini and Rachmaninov, all selected from Eaglen's signature Romantic era. She says, "I've tried to make it songs that I love and that I love singing and that I think suit me and I hope

people will think suit me too."

Piano accompaniment will be provided by Gordon Gerrard, whose list of credentials includes stints at the Calgary Opera, Vancouver Opera, Opera Luna Ottawa, Manhattan School of Music Undergraduate Opera Studio and Edmonton's own Opera Nuova.

Eaglen laughs about rehearsing with Gerrard. "We haven't met yet," she says, a hint of glee in her voice. "Frankly, I think it's going to be exciting."

While opera remains in Eaglen's blood, she's happy to be planning a road trip up to Edmonton and then Banff with her husband, rather than prepping for a grueling six-week performance.

"That's what's interesting to me," she says of new experiences. "[These days] it's much more about doing things I want to do and going to places I like to go."

- Robin Schraffer

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Edmonton

LIVINGROOM GIGS • TRENDS

Livingroom Rock



Leonard Podolak and Jordan McConnell perform in Linda Hall's house (PHOTO BY ANDREW PAUL)

BANDS GET A BOOST PLAYING DOWN HOME GIGS IN CANADIAN LIVING ROOMS, NORTH AND SOUTH FROM COAST TO COAST

BY ANDREW PAUL

Conventional wisdom dictates that inviting strangers to sleep in your house is a bad idea, especially if they're nomadic minstrels.

But thanks to a non-profit organization based out of Winnipeg, more and more Canadians are doing just that as part of Home Routes' house concert series.

This is a good way to catch up with friends over good music. It's a win-win situation for everybody," says Linda Hall, who was hosting folk musicians Leonard Podolak and Jordan McConnell in her Edmonton home last weekend. "It's good for the artist, because they have guaranteed gigs. And when they come in, you feed them dinner before the concert, and then they sleep at your place, you organize getting the audience there as the host, and then you feed them breakfast and they're on their way to the next gig."

It's a win-win situation indeed. Hosts get six intimate evenings over the course of the series with world-class musicians in the comfort of their living room, while artists bask in the fruits of a condensed, profitable tour schedule.

For the past two weeks, Podolak and McConnell have played 11 living rooms for crowds as large as 40.

It's a weird kind of gig, but lucrative at \$15 per ticket, "especially if you're on the beginning part of your career and want to get chops performing and get practice performing in a low-pressure situation where you meet people, who aren't career promoters who are going to be like, 'Arg! You didn't play long enough,'" says Podolak.

Having played with Winnipeg folk heroes The Duhks for the last eight years, Podolak and McConnell don't exactly fit into the burgeoning musician category, but their experience in the industry has taught them to recognize a good opportunity when they see one.

The unique set up of the concert series sees all proceeds go to the artists, minus a 15-per cent cut taken by Home Routes, and that's above the accommodation and meals, which effectively eliminates the lion's share of touring expenses for the band.

"Tonight was a great example of what a travelling musician should have for dinner," Podolak says. "It was a nice balanced meal. I had some rice and grains boiled up, some vegetarian chili and a nice green salad. We've had a few different things from people who aren't quite aware of us, freaky musicians needing a little nutrition."

Good food, good music and a good night's rest — what more could touring musicians ask for?

Not much, says Podolak, adding that the most trying part of the series is putting up with overly sociable hosts when all he wants to do is chill out before the show. But that's more of a funny idiosyncrasy of the setup than a drawback he says.

As for hosts, Hall says the biggest challenge is making sure the guest list is the right size to ensure the concert takes precedence over the party.

"Thirty is a good number, because you can actually talk to everybody, people can focus more on the performer, it makes for a better concert with more control," she says.

As for Podolak and McConnell, they're taking a much-needed break from their band The Duhks to pursue some personal and professional development. As a skilled luthier, McConnell is hoping to get a jump on the back order of guitars he's building for clients, and Podolak is considering taking some clogging lessons to give his live show a boost.

To satiate their fans' thirst for music, while The Duhks are on hiatus with only four gigs scheduled in 2010, the duo has joined forces with New York violinist Lydia Garrison to form The Turtleduhks, a folk group with some monster banjo, guitar and old-time fiddle action.

To catch up on the group, visit www.myspace.com/turtleduhks. For more about hosting a concert of your own, check out www.homeroutes.ca.



LAURA VEIRS

July Flame
(Globe Music/Bandcamp)

★★★★☆

Laura Veirs' meandering journey to becoming a singer/songwriter is evidence that it can take a little time to figure out where you're going in life. It wasn't until college that she developed an interest in music, and it took a geological expedition in China, prominently featuring microscopy to draw out her first songs. *July Flame*, Veirs' seventh album, is a comfortable and unimposingly, its sound sweet and delightfully quirky. Named for some peaches purchased at her local Portland farmers' market, *July Flame* showcases warm rich acoustic guitars and soft, pretty vocal melodies augmented by an array of instruments, never overbearing, that chime in at appropriate times: strings, percussion, horns, keyboards, pedal steel guitar and good old handclaps feature periodically through the 13 tracks. Veirs' poetic lyrics, populated by lush things nature evoke vivid images. A Rimbaud adaptation ("Sleepers in the valley") teams her affinity for poetry with a knack for creating mood in music. Just like Veirs meant it to be, *July Flame*—drumroll, please—is a real peach. **ROBIN SCHROFFEL**



JOHNNY CASH

American VI: Ain't No Grave
(American Recordings/Amazon)

★★★★☆

Johnny Cash is so prolific, he's still releasing albums six years after his death. The distinctive Cash baritone comes rumbling back from beyond the grave in the sixth (and presumably) final collaboration between producer Rick Rubin and the Man in Black. It was Rubin's spare, from-the-heart production that gave Cash his magnificent late-career resurgence beginning in 1994, and *American VI* is a continuation of that trend. Cash, who was in his final months while these songs were recorded, sounds 10 times like a man when one foot is in the grave, at other times like a man ready to make a dozen more albums. *American VI* may have been cobzled together with leftovers from other *American* albums, but if it was, it doesn't sound like it. Cash fans will want to add this final gem to their collection. **MAURICE TOUGAS**



JAMES GORDON

You Stars My Eyes
(Borealis Records)

★★★★☆

When listening to James Gordon's *You Stars My Eyes*, the only impression you can take away is the intimacy and familiarity of his place lyrics. The Canadian artist has yet again demonstrated his veteran ability with both sentiment and comicality. Using valiant wit and emotional expression, Gordon's 12-track album is more than just a folk album, equipped with a subtle, but solemn undertone. And with more than 30 records released, this one is an exceptional diary of an artist on the road. His songs range from astronauts in love to dejected accounts of an abandoned girl, "Virtue Lane." Gordon's skill of storytelling is suitably validated in this necessary assortment of abiding folk music. As you discover a personal side to the legendary Gordon, you can rely on an honest replication of his matchless experiences in this timeless album. **KATIE NELSON**



THE BLAME-IT'S

Plastic Plus Planet
(Earshot & the Records)

★★★★☆

Released on Edmonton's only strictly vinyl label, with a digital download companion, this album is the first as a four-piece from local caramelized pop-punk group The Blame-It's. Pressed on blue and green splattered transparent vinyl, it kicks off strong with "Turd For the Worst." Its fun, over-the-top approach has matured with more mellow variations like "No Path" and "Beer and Antidepressants." But lift the needle and flip to Side B where a unique, tilted Blame-It's flavor is found. "Future You" is an anthemic start before a great bass spotlight on "Fate Take." And guest from players are a sweet treat on the pop-punk tune "Without You Withdrawl." The other wicked cameo is Jesse Gander, the album's engineer at the Hive in B.C., playing organ on the title track, which aside from a shout out and kiss with "Small Town Blood" rounds out this release. **JENNY FENIAK**



SEAN MCCANN

Lullabies for Bloodshot Eyes
(Lean Sound Music)

★★★★☆

Having kids does funny things to some people. I was more than a little apprehensive when I cracked open the solo album from Great Big Sea's Sean McCann: *Lullabies for Bloodshot Eyes*. Did starting a family make him feel less "Consequence Free"? Has he given up partying like "The Night Pat Murphy Died"? This album serves as a reminder that not all lullabies are innocent and peaceful. McCann channels his Great Big Sea roots within a thoughtful landscape, and is pleasantly surprised by several tracks on the album. The melancholy chorus of "Someday" is catchy, and if McCann is tucking his children in to the tune of "Washed," we can rest assured they'll grow up appropriately warped and jaded. I'm not sure this album could launch a solid solo career, and it's not over 30 minutes, but this makes for a worthwhile side project. **JEN HOYER**

LISTEN-BY FISH GRIWKOWSKY

THE WHITE STRIPES
UNDER THE GREAT WHITE
NORTHERN LIGHTS

Among the sonic spellbinding the White Stripes unleash on this beautifully kitschy live album, the sound of record scratcher pulled out from clapping in the crowd instantly gets last week out down the live album as an interesting way to meet music: I believe I stand corrected. I believe I underestimated the tenured power of the White Stripes. After six albums diggin' on their own reset of the whole "here's how rock and roll is blues evolved" thing, the Stripes finally leave the studio and come out with revenge. It's sort on anyone who declared 2007's baggy pop *Rock On!* (I'm not their least magnificent). That truth may stand but, fuck, what's three years in the music biz? Ask Lady Gaga about that one. It's forever.

Point is, this album is phenomenally present, heavy, yet in its own clever way sounds like a shitty bootleg uncovered decades after Jack and Meg last touched base. It's mastered in a freewheeling, muddy, schmy sometimes out-of-tune and probably the most realistic live capture since Talking Heads played on Italian TV in 1980, where everyone noticeably lost

at least two pounds in front of our unblinking eyes. And again, the sound is impressively flat by choice. It vibrates, stands uncorrected, bounces off the frontier. Canadian venues the band hilariously visited, I built on the floor again, disgust at Iron Maiden's cover *Flight 666*. The White Stripes are several rows down the periodic table more metal than Maiden now, even as Jack melts down in the waken plops of "Jolene."

They turn the screws, distorting with the intos of "Union Forever," stay true on "We

Are Going to Be Friends," even the turn "300 MPH" into a slow, drunken country rock thing. The crowd singing like "I Just Don't Know" sounds like summer camp, like the hip playing live in the sun, like the first five minutes of being really in love.

There's just one more moment of Zepplin-like gibberish, but oh well. Jack introduces Meg as his little sister, turning that which he never ever letting the masquerade drop, a pose you could say that this album too. The hairy production, even the missionary nature of the tour. It's all cold calculation no matter how sloppy we might hope or imagine. I don't care. This is the most successful band in the world that everyone can still at least like a little. The last of the long-term superstars. And why? Just listen. **★★★★★**

GOLDFRAPP
HEAD FIRST

This is music. It's played down cocaine with strangers. Like cocaine now, compared to the 70s/80s crap from where this music is entirely devoid, there's something kind of cheap, production-wise. I'm

comparing it to Rhye and the related Knife especially, who plunge deeper, up more painfully and don't usually accidentally describe what they want done in bed as an album title.

Still, there are a few touching Ol-wia Newton-John moments, something happy and innocent enough, and what hell, you're staying up all night in the morning anyway, so times not a problem. In fact, you probably already know this, you're going to love himself. Sniff. Dr. Jeez, is that my nose bleeding again? **★★★★☆**



Postdata Is No System Error



Wintersleep's Paul Murphy and his brother Michael collaborated to make music for their mom and Postdata fans have followed. (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

WINTERSLEEP'S PAUL MURPHY AND BROTHER MICHAEL GAVE THEIR MUSIC TO MOM BEFORE TAKING IT ON THE ROAD

POSTDATA WITH CLINTON ST. JOHN AND JULIE FADER
Poco Star and GRILL, 10030-1022nd St., Friday, March 18.

BY CRAIG PALMER

In the winter of 2008, a set of rough recordings came to be after a two-week collaboration between brothers Paul (of Wintersleep fame) and Michael Murphy as a gift to their mother.

Aside from "jerky" attempts at

recording raps for fun, this was the first effort the brothers made to write and record with each other.

"We didn't really know what we were going to come up with," Paul says of their creative forays at home in Yarmouth, N.S. "It ended up good and better than we thought it would sound."

The initial recordings were lo-fi as the two sang and played into their MacBook's microphones. Nearly a year later, a real microphone was brought into the mix and the songs were re-recorded on the laptop in their apartment.

Paul says the process of working on the album with his brother was a huge step away from working with Wintersleep.

"It's a different experience all together," he says. "In Wintersleep you're working on songs for a longer period of time and there's lots of people and ideas. With [Postdata,] you definitely have a lot less work."

Now, with an album's worth of material, all they needed was a name: It was decided they would be known as Postdata, an idea Paul had prior to this project.

"The name came from my computer shutting down and it was an error on the computer screen," he explains. "It has a technological ring to it and it doesn't fit with music. It sort of has a good ring to it."

As the self-titled album was released, Paul took the show on the road without his brother and hit a few dates in Europe during the beginning of 2010.

"In Europe, we weren't playing for people who knew the record," he says. "They wouldn't have heard the record before, so we are essentially playing 10 new songs to the crowd."

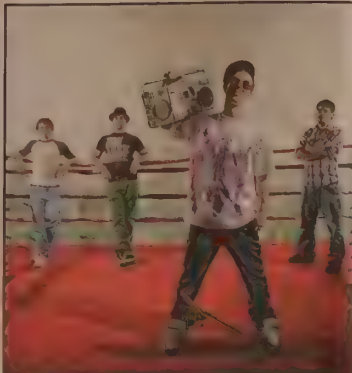
Despite the crowd being relatively unaware of Postdata's existence, Paul says the crowd sizes and response to the music were agreeable, but not as agreeable as Canada's.

"We've only played two shows in Canada so far," Paul says. "But the people in Canada have had the opportunity to listen to the album before, so the people who have heard it have a lot stronger reaction. There are also more fans in Canada, so the crowds are bigger."

Though Michael Murphy makes up the other half of Postdata, but he is unable tour because of school and an upcoming book he wrote. Wintersleep guitarist Tim D'Éon will take his place on the tour, though Paul warns Wintersleep fans to prepare for a different kind of show.

"Wintersleep is like a rock show," he says. "[The fans] shouldn't expect a rock show. Listening to the record, it's folk. It will definitely be a more intimate atmosphere."

The Other Luongo



Goodbye Beardown is hyping fans up and going for gold on Canadian stages. (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

ROBERTO LUONGO WON ON OLYMPIC ICE, BUT COUSIN MARK'S GOODBYE BEADOWN IS SCORING OUT ON THE ROAD

GOODBYE BEADOWN

Web Socketers, Sky Business and Theatre, Friday March 18, doors at 9 p.m., at the Pineside (2053-42nd Ave.)

BY TRENT WILKIE

Having his hand described as the bastard children of the Beastie Boys and the Red Hot Chili Peppers doesn't surprise Mark Luongo, bassist for Goodbye Beardown. What also doesn't shock him is his cousin Roberto helping Canada win a gold medal in men's hockey.

But what does startle him is how well his band is doing.

"We just played the Olympic Village with Sam Roberts, which was

lounge at the fumes and while we were there, George Stroumboulopoulos walked in," Luongo remembers. "So, we excitedly started running all our possible name ideas by him. As he was listening to us go through the names, Rick Campanelli walks up and the two of them started talking. So they put their heads together and decided that Goodbye Beardown was the best name."

Founded by "former battle rapper" Dustin Overhill, Luongo joined the dance rock outfit after putting turntables as the bassist for catchy west coast singer/songwriter Daniel Wesley, who by chance is playing the same venue the following night.

"Last weekend we played Revel stoke and honestly, nobody at the show had really heard of us before," says Luongo. "We had a few support

PEOPLE WERE JUST LOSING IT. THEY WERE RUSHING THE STAGE TO DANCE WITH US AND SOME OF THE GIRLS, WELL, I CAN'T EVEN DESCRIBE SOME OF THE GESTURES THEY WERE MAKING TOWARDS US.

phenomenal," says Luongo. "Now we are about to head out on our second Western Canadian tour and it feels like the Olympics just ended yesterday. I think everyone is still feeling the vibe of the games, it's definitely not as strong this week as it was last week, but hey, I'm still high off the big win in the Canadian men's hockey game. My last name is Luongo for Pete's sake, so I've got to be feeling it."

Luongos aside, there is another story about a name-in here. How did Goodbye Beardown come to be? Again it seems as if Luongo was in the right place at the right time, forgive me for the goalie analogy.

"We were volunteering at the VIP

ers there, but mostly it was a new crowd. We got it up to such a fevered pitch that they had to shut the bar down early. People were just losing it. They were rushing the stage to dance with us and some of the girls, well, I can't even describe some of the gestures they were making towards us. At one point the bar manager came up to us and said, 'Could you do something to calm people down?' and our singer Dustin Overhill said, 'Man, I'm not very good at the calming down part. My job is to hype people up and that's all I can do. It's one way street!'"

For Goodbye Beardown, that one way street seems to be going top shelf. Sorry.

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HALO

Nature Of Nurture



The children in *The White Ribbon* are as deeply flawed as adults. (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

A STYLIZED EXPLORATION OF CHILDHOOD INNOCENCE GOES ON FAR TOO LONG WITHOUT DELIVERING A RESOLUTION

THE WHITE RIBBON

Written and directed by Michael Haneke, opening Friday March 19 at the Guinness Theatre
★★★★☆

BY RANDY BROSKY

Anyone who says children are innocent has never been accosted by one.

I'm not saying children are evil well, not all of them.) but the same plays of greed, status and power that adults go through are echoed by the young. They take their cues from us, practice among themselves and grow into the same complex, flawed beings that adults on this planet have always been.

This is explored in richly stylized, ponderously paced detail by Michael Haneke's *The White Ribbon*. Set in a

light surrounded by deep shadows draw us in. There is no music during the opening or closing credits. It's jarring but seductive.

The performances for the most part are completely believable. The characters are all flawed deeply, yet you can't help but watch them intently, wanting to know what they'll do next.

However, the deliberate pace is either too slow, or the distance travelled is too long. At almost two hours in, I found myself checking the time. There was more than half an hour to go.

This might have been a worthy journey for a great payoff, but for a story purist like myself, I found the lack of resolution disappointing, especially after 150 minutes.

Haneke himself says that not tying up all the loose ends is deliberate. "that in life," you don't know all the reasons that something happens."

I think as viewers, consumers of

THE CHARACTERS ARE ALL FLAWED DEEPLY, YET YOU CAN'T HELP BUT WATCH THEM INTENTLY.

northern German village on the eve of the First World War, a series of increasingly puzzling and disturbing crimes begins to unfold. The mystery deepens, but the merita of the community seems to want to sweep the crimes under the rug rather than face the implications of what the truth may reveal.

The visual style of the production is immersive and captivating. Haneke pays great attention to detail in every shot, every sound, every light source, every emotive moment of his characters. We have scenes where the action is on the other side of a door from the camera. Pools of

stories, we either need answers or judgement or some sort of resolution. Even if things collapse irretrievably, there has been a consequence for the actions that have changed the world the characters live in.

In *The White Ribbon*, life goes on. Unchanged. Unchallenged. Unanswered mysteries abound.

If you like films based solely on style and character, where a tremendous amount of stuff happens, *The White Ribbon* is an absolute delight. If you need your stories to come to some sort of satisfying close, it will likely leave you feeling a bit let down.



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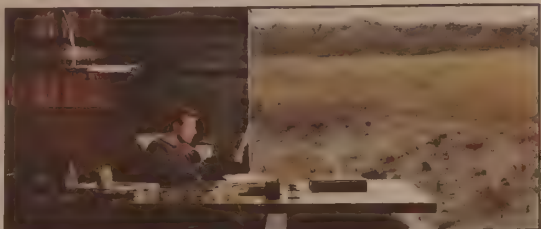
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FILM REVIEW

Master of Mystery and Thrill

EWAN MCGREGOR is hired to write about a crooked ex-politician played by Pierce Brosnan in Polanski's latest *The Ghost Writer* (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

**ROMAN POLANSKI MAY
BE A CREEP, BUT THE
GHOST WRITER IS STILL
A MASTERFUL THRILLER**

THE GHOST WRITER

Directed by Roman Polanski, starring Pierce Brosnan.

Kim Cattrall, Ewan McGregor, opens Friday March 11

★★★★☆

BY KENTON SMITH

Consider merely the opening and closing scenes of this movie. They're the work of a master director. What tremendous style, humour, and seeming effortless. The final shot alone may go down as a classic. I won't spoil it for you. Rather, let me set the stage.

The film begins with a ferry docking in stormy conditions; cut to the hold, which empties vehicle by vehicle until a lone SUV is left behind, centre frame.

A forklift arrives; there's a nice chuckle as it removes the abandoned vehicle, and the car alarm goes off. End sequence with a face washed up on a fierce beach, bobbing in the surf.

With these few, spare, direct shots, Roman Polanski's *The Ghost Writer* establishes a compelling mystery, an ominous mood and mischievous tongue-in-cheek. The director of *Rosemary's Baby*, *Chinatown*, and *The Pianist* still has it.

The body in question is of a ghost writer, hired to turn the badly penned memoirs of an ex-British prime minister into bestselling gold. The former leader and subject, Adam Lang (Pierce Brosnan), is facing possible war crimes charges. Into the turmoil of his household enters a ringier writer (Ewan McGregor) who remains unnamed throughout the film.

It's a lucrative opportunity for the Ghost: a quarter of a million dollars stands to be made for a month's work. It's also intoxicating, being close to a man like Lang, in the midst of a far-reaching scandal. Unfortunately for the Ghost, it may also become deadly, after his antennae start quivering.

What happened to his predecessor, and why? Is Lang in face guilty of abetting the torture of innocent terror suspects? And if so, was anyone

pulling the strings offstage?

We share in the Ghost's imprudent curiosity every step of the way, discovery by discovery, until we suddenly realize, at the same time he does, how deeply he's stepped in it. Oh, but how expertly Polanski reels us in.

Yes, the man is an unrepentant child fucker. And some of his peers, including even the great Martin Scorsese, have earned a place in the annals of douchebaggery for their recent "FREE ROMAN!" doo-doo.

Many may choose not to patronize a movie directed by such a man. That's more than legitimate. But it has nothing to do with whether the movie is any good.

In point of fact, *The Ghost Writer* is extremely good: it's stylish, amusing, and suspenseful. The attention to detail is delicious, down to the casting for juicy little character bits. It's a surprise to see James Belushi playing a publisher, but it quickly becomes funny — on purpose.

Indeed, *The Ghost Writer* could almost be considered a wicked black comedy, like Polanski's at play. Some scenes unfold as if he were a pianist, adding little flourishes here and there.

It's so satisfying to see Pierce Brosnan in roles like this. Forget Agent 007. Brosnan was born to play cats. He's hilariously pompous as Lang, but he's also one nasty customer, flagrantly carrying on an affair in front of his bitter, but loyal wife (Olivia Williams). She might need someone to comfort her.

"Bad idea!" the Ghost tells himself.

The Ghost bursts with bad ideas, actually. One of the delicious things about the movie is how the character so often seems driven by less than noble inclinations: greed, lust, vanity, nosiness. But who said heroes must be angels?

In the final analysis, *The Ghost Writer*, based on a bestseller by Robert Harris, isn't quite masterpiece material. Still, it's great to see directors like Polanski swing hard, even if they're not playing in the World Series.

**The White Ribbon**

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Nominations**

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MOVIE GUIDE • WHAT'S PLAYING IN THEATRES

NEW THIS WEEK

REPO MEN

Set in the future, medical breakthroughs have allowed organs to be mechanically reproduced and bought as replacement parts, but for those who can't pay their bills, the repo men are their worst nightmare.

THE BOUNTY HUNTER

A bounty hunter's next assignment is to take out his ex-wife, a reporter unraveling a murder cover-up. But he gives him the slip and the chase is on with both exes running for their lives.

THE WHITE RIBBON

In a German village on the eve of the First World War, disturbing crimes begin to unfold. The mystery deepens, but the slow pace and length of the movie curdle the highly stylized impact. **Review by D.J.**

★★★☆☆

THE GHOST WRITER

Roman Polanski establishes a compelling mystery involving a replacement ghost writer to pen the memoirs of an ex-British prime minister facing. His subject is facing possible war crimes charges, a body wishes up on the beach and whatever happened to the list writer? **Review by M.B.**

★★★★

DIARY OF A WIMPY KID

Based on Jeff Kinney's illustrated novel, it's the story of a student who documents his failed attempts to diffuse the endless social landmines of middle school in his "journal."

ALSO PLAYING

REMEMBER ME

Rob Pattinson stars in this romantic drama involving two young adults who bond over separate family tragedies they've both suffered through.

OUR FAMILY WEEDING

When a young couple return from college and announce their engagement, both their ego-driven dad and dad's wife have their plans. But through it all, the true lesson: love and life are learned.

GREEN ZONE

Starring Matt Damon, Green Zone tells of a U.S. army officer who goes rogue after receiving faulty information regarding the weapons of mass destruction he's hunting down in an unstable region.

SHUT OUT OF MY LEAGUE

An average guy meets the girl of his dreams, but things begin to fall apart as family and friends criticize the relationship.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

In Tim Burton's adaptation of the Lewis Carroll classic, 19-year-old Alice returns to her childhood fantasy world to stop the Red

Queen's reign of terror

★★★☆☆

THE LAST STATION

With a will leaving his wife and property to the Russian opole, famed author Leo Tolstoy struggles to balance an unrealistic life with his fame and fortune.

BROOKLYN'S FINEST

A cracked cop thriller that could be better Brooklyn's finest tells of three New York officers from different backgrounds who converge in the Brooklyn ghetto for a showdown at a housing project.

★★★★

COP OUT

Brice Willis plays a veteran N.Y. cop whose ex-wife's bailiff can't wait to use to pay for his daughter's wedding, stolen by a memorabilia-obsessed gangster, and he hears his partner will help get it back.

THE CRAZIES

A strange loan affects the residents in Ogden, Marsh, Iowa, rendering them psychotic before dying. The towns' sheriff teams up with a few other unburned folks to make sense of the situation.

SHUTTER ISLAND

Leonardo DiCaprio plays a U.S. marshal in the 1950s, sent to investigate the escape of a madman from Boston's Shutter Island Asylum Hospital. But he's finding opposition from the doctors, whose treatments range from unethical to absolutely sinister.

CRAZY HEART

Brad Pitt's a country singer on a steady slide into obscurity, behind the new country sensation he once mentored. But ours what little heart he has left into Jean, a small-town love interest and single mom who can't help but become wrapped up in him. **Bad** Oscar winner for Jeff Bridges. **★★★★**

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IS IT JUST A CITY?

SOMETHING'S ENTERTAINING EDMONTON

sunday

monday

tuesday

wednesday

thursday

friday

saturday



Chicago, Jubilee Auditorium, March 23, 8 p.m.

MARCH 21

music | JAY MALINOWSKI If you're wondering who the hell this is, he's the guy from Deadmau5. Soundcheck. And he's playing tonight with Kinnie Star, and our beloved Michael Rault. Pown Shop, 8 p.m.

MARCH 22

music | EVERYTIME I DIE And all along we thought that only we could use this expression. If you want to express your aggression on a Monday night, this is just for you! Starliner Room, 7 p.m.

MARCH 23

theatre | CHICAGO Start the cal, we know a whoopee spot, where the gin is cold, but the piano's hot. It's at the Jubilee, and the seats are free. Come on down and see all that jazz. Jubilee Auditorium, 8 p.m.

MARCH 24

theatre | LET'S GO TO WAR Let's not. The only violence you'll see here is all of the ladies trying to cram ass into that small bathroom. O! Snap! presents a night filled with sets by DJ Degree and guests: Pown Shop, 9 p.m.

MARCH 25

music | COMMON THREADS SPRING 2010 FASHION EVENT Need we say more? A night filled with locally designed clothing and jewelry. Watch your ass Karl Lagerfeld. Editor's coming to get you. The Common, 7 p.m.

MARCH 26

music | JIMMY RAININ This Nova Scotia name must be very excited. This time he's able to take the stage with his sisters around to seal his thunder. Shake a leg. Jimmy Boy! Festival. Place, 7:30 p.m.

MARCH 27

event | THE V.I.P. KID'S SHOW Had a little bit too much last night? If that's the case, ditch the kids for a few hours, and catch some 'n's in the Casanova. With music, comedy, and puppets, we promise they'll be entertained. Yanoze Theatre, 11 a.m.

MUSIC THURSDAY

Live Music

A BOMB IN THE WOODS STADIUM ROOM, 10:00-10:27. With Hazards, Phobias, and Vainies. 9 p.m.
KARLA ANDERSON HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB, 10:00-10:27. PLAINFIELD, With Jordan Lutter and Lauren Rabeau. 7:30 p.m.
LARA JO JEFFREY'S CAFE & WINE BAR, 9:40-10:40. With Petrus Bellefleur's Grill. EST. ALBERTA. IN PERFORM. ST. ALBERTA. 7 p.m.
REAL KICKENERS NEW CITY, 10:00-10:30. With Drownthoughts. 9 p.m.
TOMMY GRIMES BRYCE BAR & GRILL, 10:00-10:27. With Greg Gray.
VIRING FELL PUNK SHOP, 2ND FL., 10:30-10:40. With Gels. 9 p.m.

DJs/Club Nights

CHUCK LAKE LVL 2, 10:30-10:40. With Funkalongs and Red-Fix. 9 p.m.
DI GUANO BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE (TOP LEVEL), 10:45-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays. THE COMMON, 10:24-12:24. With DJ's: Dorian and Sony Gomez.
GRASS SHOW BINGO PLETHA MONASTERY, 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
ILL-ESHA LVL 2, 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
KREXTER LVL 2, 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
NOTORIOUS THURSDAYS DANCING STROLLS, 10:30-11:00. With DJ's: Dorian and Sony Gomez.
PUMP SHARK THURSDAYS, 10:30-11:00. With DJ's: Dorian and Sony Gomez.
THIS IS IT THURSDAYS FLOOD LOUNGE, 10:30-11:00. With DJ's: Dorian and Sony Gomez.

MUNICIPAL HAPPENINGS • WITH BILL BENSON



have something going on? let us know by Friday noon | listings@see.greatwest.ca

MARCH 18

theatre | RECLAIM TIB AS A WEAPONS & DRUG-FREE ZONE! First we take Manhattan then we take Berlin. This is an excellent step towards seeing our city operate at its full friendly potential. Viva la Edmonton! Avenue Theatre, 5 p.m.

MARCH 19

meeting | EDMONTON NATURE CLUB Covering topics such as water, trees, birds, and bees. This long standing organization will keep you on your toes when it comes to the preservation of green in the capital city. No. We don't mean "cash money." Royal Alberta Museum, 7 p.m.

MARCH 20

theatre | MOBY DICK Quite the busy bill! Joining them will be Ian Hargrove. Wicked Awesomes, Brazilian Money. Sounds like a collection of a rough night in Rio de Janeiro. Liked Lounge, 8 p.m.

MARCH 25

music | COMMON THREADS SPRING 2010 FASHION EVENT Need we say more? A night filled with locally designed clothing and jewelry. Watch your ass Karl Lagerfeld. Editor's coming to get you. The Common, 7 p.m.

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JOHN K. SAMSON HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB, 10:00-10:27. PLAINFIELD. With Deadmau5. 9 p.m.
LIGHT TRAVELS HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB, 10:00-10:27. With Sadies. 9 p.m.
LIVE CELTIC MUSIC JEFFREY'S CAFE & WINE BAR, 9:40-10:40. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
POSTALIA BRYCE BAR & GRILL, 10:00-10:27. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
SHANEY BRYCE BAR & GRILL, 10:00-10:27. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
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DJs/Club Nights

ADOLPH BATTERED THE BARN ULTRA LOUNGE, 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
BEVERLY FRIDAYS (LVL 1), 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
BLOOM THE BARN ULTRA LOUNGE, 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
CONNECTED FRIDAYS THE BARN ULTRA LOUNGE, 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
DI GUANO BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE (TOP LEVEL), 10:45-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
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DI SEXY BOOTS BAR, 10:00-10:27. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
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SOLICE FRIDAYS (LVL 1), 10:30-11:00. With Eazy Daz It Thursdays.
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SAVAGE (cont'd from p. 26)

tionism. Confess that you've been a bit classed with the site, add that it's why you've been so horny lately, and then invite him to join you for a session. If he seems into the idea, or gets into it once you're online, sheepishly confess that you've been flashing a little skin yourself.

Then fuck the husband's brains out.

CONFIDENTIAL TO SAVAGE

LOVERS: I need to ask you to do something. Not for me, but for a teenage lesbian who lives in a small town. Constance McCullen is a senior at Itawamba Agricultural High School in Fulton, Miss. When she asked the school if she could attend prom with her girlfriend, she was told no. When Constance pressed her case, the Itawamba County School Board cancelled prom rather than allow Constance to attend with her girlfriend. The school board had to know what would happen next: The other students at Itawamba Agricultural blamed Constance for getting prom cancelled and "ruining senior year."

Constance is now being harassed and bullied. The school board claims it canceled prom to avoid "distractions." Now it's up to us — to decent people everywhere — to make sure that bigotry and discrimination are a much bigger distraction for the Itawamba County School District than inclusion and tolerance ever could've been.

E-mail, call, and fax Itawamba Schools superintendent Teresa McNece (tmcnece@itawamba.k12.ms.us, phone 662-862-2159 ext. 14, fax 662-862-4713) and Itawamba Agricultural principal Tracie Wiygul (twiygul@itawamba.k12.ms.us, 662-862-3104). Then

join the Facebook page "Let Constance Take Her Girlfriend to Prom." And, finally, make donations to the Mississippi Safe Schools Coalition (www.mssafe-schools.org), which is organizing an alternate prom that will welcome all students, and make a larger donation to the ACLU LGBT Project (www.tinyurl.com/y19mnbk), which is defending Constance and other gay teenagers across the country. Call, write, fax, donate. Constance needs to know that there are people all over the world who are on her side. And, more importantly, Itawamba County Schools needs to know that we're not going to let them get away with this. Be respectful, but be relentless. Let's show these bigots what a real distraction looks like. Get 'em.

Find the Savage Lovecast (my weekly podcast) every Tuesday at thestranger.com/savage
mail@savagelove.net

ASTROLOGY: MARCH 18 - MARCH 24 - BY THE KID

CRUISING THE COSMOS

PISCES (FEB. 19 - MARCH 20)

Disappointment isn't always such a bad thing due to the realizations it brings. Like how neither gets handed the cup on a big silver platter — you've gotta work for it. If it really does matter. This week, use the lessons you've learned and whatever you get'll be rightfully earned!

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 19)

If you're honest and forthright is all that you do, then there ain't nothing The Man can put over on you. In other words — don't ask, don't tell, cover your ass and everything'll be sweet. This week, if you come correct, success is something you can expect!

TAURUS (APRIL 20 - MAY 20)

Most folks think money'll fix all their troubles, but in many cases, it'll cause 'em to double. Money ain't always so coolah and if you ain't careful with what you get, you'll find it's easier to wind up in debt. This week, be careful with cash to avoid being under the slave driver's lash!

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUNE 20)

Everybody knows you ruler, Mercury, has got wings on his helmet 'n' feet and that's what makes him so swift 'n' fleet. But do you understand what he holds in his hand? It's the caduceus — the sign of the medical bat. This week, no matter how hard it is, help others ease their pain and in the end, you'll also gain!

CANCER (JUNE 21 - JULY 21)

You've got a problem that can't be ignored and that's the fact that you're so dang bereft. You need a challenge, like a warm bath-shower. To force you to draw from the strength you've yet to tap. This week, if you're up to the test, you'll be amazed at your newly found zest!

LEO (JULY 22 - AUG. 21)

Givin' up all to make something you can leave you with neither! Except feelin' like a jerk. Your commitment to caring is commendable, but your resources ain't infinitely expendable. This week, give all that you're able, but make sure you put food on your own table!

VIRGO (AUG. 22 - SEPT. 22)

One bill the symbols of Virgo is a girl surrounded by suitors, bein' choosy before pickin' one that perfectly suits her. Like her, you should be delectable a decision isn't entirely aligned with your vision. This week, keep on diggin' until you find what fits the bill!

LIBRA (SEPT. 23 - OCT. 22)

Don't celebrate quite yet 'cause it ain't a sure bet that this ain't as far as you're gonna get. You still haven't climbed as high as you wished — you've only just got base camp established. That was the easy part, and now here's the real test: climb to the top (or just your own Everest).

SCORPIO (OCT. 23 - NOV. 21)

"Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die!" is a great philosophy, but it's often a lie. Like it was all of those times that you didn't actually cook but ate the next day, hungover and broke. This week, save the toxin on your waist, organs and head and prepare for tomorrow in case you ain't dead!

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22 - DEC. 21)

There ain't nothing wrong with struttin' around like you're the cock of the walk while all the other chickens clock as they gawk. How if you get it. Baww it, right? That ain't the problem — what gets you in heck is when waller 'tall ain't enough and you start to peck. This week, no matter how hot you is, keep your beak outta other hen's baw!

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22 - JAN. 19)

If you're lookin' around with your eyes wide open, you'll notice that nature ain't s'posed "round moon" about winter's end and spring's imminent start. Heck — no plants and animals are comin' up for air and simmer down to their beach wear. This week, take a page outta their book and start stirrin' outside and cookin' your look!

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 - FEB. 18)

You may not recognize Lady Luck if you wrongly assume that she won't be disguised in a mask or costume. Sure as shootin', she'll show up this week and holds the key to the conclusion you seek. If you're payin' attention and not actin' dumb, she'll help you to realize your hopes-for outcome!



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SAVAGELOVE: DAN SAVAGE

DISTRAUGHT WIFE WONDERES IF HER MARRIAGE CAN SURVIVE HER HUSBAND'S FETISH FOR RUNNING SHOES

My husband and I have been married for one year, but we had been dating for 10 years prior to that. I thought we had a very understanding relationship. In the last couple of days, I have found out that he has a serious obsession with females wearing running shoes. He had in the past hinted at the fact that it turns him on, but I had no idea the scope of this obsession. I've discovered that he spends a large number of hours a week devoted to this fetish. He was sloppy in covering his tracks one day, and I found evidence on his computer. I should also mention that when he told me he thought running shoes are hot, I thought he meant

on me, not on all living and breathing females.

I believed that he could trust me enough to be open with me, but he has been hiding this from me for 11 years! I am still in shock and not quite sure how to deal with it. He obviously feels ashamed, otherwise he would have told me years ago. Why did he not bring this up before we got married? I had a right to know what I was getting into. I don't know if I can live with knowing that he gets a hard-on for every running-shoe-wearing woman who goes by. I feel betrayed and creeped out. He says that he didn't want to hurt me, but he has done just that. I feel physically sick to my stomach knowing that I didn't really know who he was all this time. We still have to work it out and really talk about our new situation. But I am beginning to think our marriage isn't going to survive this. Am I being too sensitive? How can I fix my marriage?

Dumbfounded In Brooklyn

Does your husband like your tits only, DIB, or can he get a hard-on for every tits-wearing woman who

goes by? Does he like your pussy only, DIB, or can he get a hard-on for every pussy-having woman who goes by?

If your marriage can survive the husband being attracted to tits and pussy generally, DIB, but attracted to your tits and pussy particularly, your marriage should be able to survive the awareness that your husband is into women in running shoes generally but into you in running shoes particularly.

Why did he keep it from you? Because he was ashamed, DIB, because guys with fetishes are told – hey there, Prude! – that they're disturbed and unlovable, and because no one bothers to inform straight women that fetishes are to male sexuality what lies are to a Fox News broadcast. Likelier to be present than not. So he dropped hints but didn't tell you during year one – or year two or three, year four, etc. – because he was afraid you would have the reaction you're having at year 11.

So what do you do now? You forgive him, if you give a shit about your marriage, if you actually ever loved him, and you do a little reading about male sexuality. Daniel Bergner's *The Other Side of Desire* is a good place to start.

And ladies? If your boyfriend or husband has "hinted at the fact that [something or other] turns him on," you can safely assume that [something or other] really turns him on.

A good friend of mine is engaged to a woman with an extremely low sex drive. He'd like to have sex every day; she barely responds to his touch. I advised him to work up the nerve to suggest an "understanding" or to disengage. If he's this frustrated as a 27-year-old fiancé, how is he going to feel after five years in a monogamous marriage?

Concerned Buddy

Either your buddy won't be married in five years or he won't be monogamously married. Either way, CB, you spoke up, and that's all a friend is required to do under the circumstances. Now you have to stand back and let your buddy make the biggest mistake of his life.

I assume you've heard of Chatroulette by now. I discovered it about four weeks ago, and I am strangely turned on by all the dudes on there jerking off. I have started to show my tits to

some of these dudes because it is such a massive turn-on for me (who knew I had this exhibitionist streak in me?). My husband doesn't know about any of this. However, all sexual arousal is redirected his way in the form of really hot, passionate fucking! I feel bad about not telling my husband. Do you think this is cheating? If you say it is, Dan, I will stop.

Clever Acronym

I don't want to call what you're doing – flashing random Chatroulette pervs – cheating, as cheating is such an ugly word, but odds are good that your husband would call it that. Even so, CA, I'm reluctant to tell you to stop. Spend a few weeks reading my e-mails, and you will come to regret anything – anything at all – that lights a fire under the marital bed as a universal good. So talk to your husband. Tell him that – like everyone else on earth – you "discovered" Chatroulette about four weeks ago. Then tell him you were surprised by (1) just how many dudes are jerking off in front of their computers at any given moment and (2) just how turned on you were by their exhibit-

SAVAGE cont'd on p. 25

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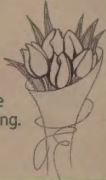
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